

HOW YOU CAN AVOID A RUNWAY INCURSION

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Ever gotten lost while sharing your hard earned flying skill with a friend? I did, and I did it on the ground. Yes, that's right, on the ground.

My daughter and I flew to San Jose airport to visit friends and generally have a good time. This wasn't my first trip to San Jose and I was comfortable and excited. The flight was uneventful until I exited the runway after landing at San Jose.

I stopped beyond the hold bars, called ground control and requested taxi clearance to the parking area I had used on my other visits. The controller came back with the surprising news that my favorite tie down spot had been closed by the city and was no longer available. Before I could recover from the news, the controller asked me where else I wanted to go? I had no idea!

What followed was some blundering and real embarrassment. I was lucky that was as bad as it got.

Since then, I have prepared for visits to airports, even familiar ones, with three primary tools:

- an airport diagram
- a plan
- standard radio communication phraseology.

Airport diagrams can be found in instrument chart packages. They are also available in several publications for the visual flight rules (VFR) pilots. These products will have a great deal of useful information. The diagrams will display the runway environment, name the runways and taxiways, give all the frequencies needed and a variety of helpful hints. A pilot shop or catalog is a good source.

The plan will be up to you. Where do you want to go? What services will you need? Where will you park for the restaurant or overnight?

Once you know where on the airport you want to go, you can lay out some possible routes to that spot. Assume you land in the direction most often used at your destination. Notice what taxiways you will use and what intersections you may encounter on your way.

Next, you want an alternate route. Assume, for instance, you land to the south instead of the westerly direction you are used to. What taxiways will you probably be assigned? What intersections will you need to navigate? Are there any obvious trouble spots?

With the airport diagram studied ahead and easily accessible to you after arrival, you are not likely to become confused.

Your communications with air traffic control will complete your safety planning. Before keying the microphone, have your transmission prepared.

- Who are you calling?
- Who are you?
- Where are you?
- What do you want?
- *Do you have the recorded weather?*

Typical call-ups:

" San Jose ground, Cessna 456
November, clear of one niner left, taxi to
Charlie's Café.

" San Jose clearance, Cessna 456
November, at Charlie's Café ramp, with
Whiskey, taxi runway one niner left."

How do you ask for help?

" San Jose ground, Cessna 456
November, at Charlie's Café ramp, with
Whiskey, *unfamiliar, request progressive*
taxi to runway 19L. When you make this

request , controllers will guide you one segment of your journey at a time.

When you receive a clearance, you want to acknowledge it quickly and effectively. For instance, you have requested runway 19L and the controller says, "Cessna 456 November, proceed to runway 19L.

You can respond, "19L for 456 November."

With any hold short instructions, you are *required* to repeat the instruction.

" Cessna 456 November, proceed to Runway 19L via taxiway bravo, hold short runway 19R."

Response:

" Runway 19L via taxiway bravo, *hold short runway 19R*, 456 November."

With this answer you have acknowledged the instruction and completed the transmission with your n-number. Controllers are required to get verification you have heard and understood their instructions. You want to do it effectively using only as many words as you need to be clear.

So with the three tools of *a diagram, a plan and good radio technique*, runway incursions will be a problem you have heard about and one that does not happen to you.